



Transportation Advisory Committee

Date: March 9, 2022

Time: 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM.

Location: Conducted via Remote Participation (Zoom).

Minutes. [DRAFT]

1. Administration.

Members in Attendance: Dan Amstutz (DPCD), Bill Copithorne (DPW), Lenard Diggins, Ray Jones, Melissa Laube, Jeff Maxtutis, Howard Muise, Tycho Nightingale, Corey Rateau (APD), Scott Smith, Laura Swan (Chair), and Shoji Takahashi.

Members of Public in Attendance: Linda Epstein, Petru Sofio, and Joe Solomon.

The Chair provided notice regarding Remotely Conducted Meetings, referring the members to the agenda attachment entitled “Governor Charles Baker’s 3/12/2020 Executive Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law”. The Chair reviewed the meeting ground rules and announced that the meeting was being recorded.

B. Approval of February 9, 2022 Meeting Notes.

The Minutes of the February 9, 2022 meeting were approved. Corey Rateau abstained from voting as he was absent for the February meeting.

C. Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

D. Select Board Project List.

The Select Board maintains its own list of transportation-related projects that have been referred to TAC to promote accountability. The Select Board and TAC project lists should be compared regularly to ensure project completion. Laura Swan and Daniel Amstutz recently provided an update to the Board and will work

together to reconcile and close out the projects still on the Board's list as applicable.

2. Public Comments (for information only, not for action).

There were no public comments.

3. Town Issues/Activities (not already on the agenda).

A. Dan Amstutz provided an update from the Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD).

Minuteman Bikeway Planning Project. A public meeting was held last week focused on waysides and trailheads, and it included interactive polling. Recommendations are being drafted.

MassTrails Grant project – Mystic River Path to Minuteman Bikeway. A meeting is scheduled for next week among DCR, MassDOT, Solomon Foundation, and other key stakeholders with a focus group meeting the week after. The second public meeting is scheduled for March 30, which will include sharing concepts on the path and changes to the rotaries.

Blue Bikes Stations will be redeployed at the beginning of April. There is a Town Warrant on a special appropriation to expand the system with additional stations. Scott Smith inquired whether lower-performing stations will be relocated. Dan Amstutz responded that the Town is seeking permanent off-street location(s) for stations to improve performance.

Mass Ave and Appleton St; and Chestnut St. The Town is negotiating a contract with a consultant for these projects, which is close to execution. In response to a question from Len Diggins, the Mass Ave/Appleton St Parking Study is being finalized and is awaiting final review from staff.

Shared Streets and Spaces Grant Application has been submitted. The MBTA assisted the Town in its application on bus lane improvements on the eastbound side of Mass Ave. Petru Sofio advocated for a westbound Bus Lane on Mass Ave from Alewife Brook Parkway to Lafayette St to coincide with planned pedestrian safety improvements at Lafayette St. This bus-lane extension would connect with the Mass Ave Bus Lane in Cambridge. He praised the coordinated efforts of Arlington and Cambridge on bus priority.

Arlington Redevelopment Board (ARB). Hearings are scheduled for March 14 on changing minimum parking requirements for apartments, which is significantly more than what is required for single-family homes.

Remote Meetings extended through July 15.

B. Corey Rateau provided an update from the Police Department (APD).

Chestnut Terr. Emergency vehicle access is being impeded by parked automobiles. APD is working with DPW on signage.

Dallin Safe Routes to School (SRTS). APD and DPW have been working on signage for the pilot project.

Community Traffic Safety Grant for a public meeting of new drivers and elderly drivers on traffic safety in conjunction with In Control Driving School. This grant was submitted and approved in 2019 and then was put on hold due to COVID-19 shutdown. Notably, the original application was prepared with input from Arlington Public School (APS) and Arlington Council on Aging (ACoA), which now has a new Superintendent and Director, respectively. Under the terms of the grant, the session is to-be completed before September.

Parking Scofflaw List considering restarting a list for people who are not paying parking tickets.

Mass Ave and Appleton St. Petru Sofio asked whether APD will be reinstating the left-turn ban from Mass Ave onto Appleton St during times of solar glare. Corey Rateau responded that the Town Manager makes the determination. Len Diggins will request that the Town Manager implement a left-turn ban.

C. Bill Copithorne provided an update from the Department of Public Works (DPW).

DPW is preparing for construction season to start in April, including preparing upcoming bids and contract renewals.

Nonfunctioning street lights near the Dunkin Donuts in Arlington Heights were repaired using a temporary conduit. A permanent repair will be completed when the weather improves.

Speed display sign on Lowell St: Programming for display was updated.

Gray St at Fountain Rd/Quincy St signs near Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFB): updated signs are being fabricated by the sign shop.

Mystic St at Kimball Rd: installed No Turn On Red Sign.

Mystic St Bridge (near the Arlington Police Station): MassDOT is reviewing the plans for bridge reconstruction; Eversource is moving utility conduits. Bidding is projected to-be scheduled in the summer with construction beginning spring, 2023. Construction will continue over two full construction seasons.

4. Update: Complete Streets Prioritization Plan.

The state Complete Streets program is a MassDOT program for municipalities to-be eligible for certain transportation infrastructure grants (\$400,000 per 4-year cycle), and an update to the Town's Complete Streets Prioritization Plan is to-be completed as recommended in Connect Arlington. An updated project list must be approved by MassDOT, which can be updated every two to three years. The Town will need to update the list to remove completed projects; about half of the projects on the list have been completed. New projects in Connect Arlington will be reviewed and prioritized to-be added to an updated list for review and approval by MassDOT. These projects would then be eligible to apply for funding under Complete Streets.

Funding is available for technical assistance in updating the project list including cost estimates for projects. Public outreach and engagement will come after Town Meeting.

Jeff Maxtutis added that projects eligible for Complete Streets funding are those under local jurisdiction only. However, prioritizing projects regardless of eligibility for Complete Streets is useful for funding purposes. In response to a question from Scott Smith, Dan Amstutz clarified that numbered state routes can be under local jurisdiction.

5. Vote: Lower Washington St One Way.

Melissa Laube discussed that the Lower Washington St One Way memo now incorporates text to make clear that abutters should seek engineer design services.

The Working Group Memo was approved by a vote of 9 – 1. Bill Copithorne voted against approval; Corey Rateau abstained; and Len Diggins was absent for the vote.

6. Park Avenue Corridor.

A. Update: Signal at Park Ave and Appleton St.

Jeff Maxtutis reminded the TAC that traffic data to investigate the installation of a traffic signal at Park Ave and Appleton St was collected pre-COVID in 2019. Based on the 2019 data, the intersection met warrants for a signal. However, as years have passed, TAC will need to obtain new data (capacity analysis, coordination of signals; turning movements) and conduct another signal warrant analysis. Data collection and analysis will require more than \$5,000 for a consultant to review the intersection.

Corey Rateau offered that APD has six counters and can obtain the new data other than turning movements. Jeff Maxtutis added that turning counts could be obtained manually, which can be paid for with the TAC budget.

Dan Amstutz requested text to guide the Town on the scope of work for seeking an appropriate consultant.

B. Update: MBTA Bus Stops.

Dan Amstutz updated TAC on the MBTA-proposed changes to bus stops along Park Ave and Wachusett Ave. MBTA is preparing a new proposal for bus stops, and it will leave at least one bus stop around Park Circle.

Bill Copithorne added that MWRA is planning a large project along Park Ave in the next 2 – 5 years to upsize the water main. MBTA, MWRA, and the Town need to coordinate on this project, which could be quite disruptive.

7. Update: Dallin SRTS.

The Arrival-Dismissal Pilot Program is underway and has been working smoothly for the last 3 days. Laura Swan thanked Corey Rateau, APD, and DPW for help with signs and their placement.

8. Update: Summer St Crosswalk

Shoji Takahashi has received emails of support for a Summer St crosswalk from a number of residents on or near Summer St.

9. Update: Overlook Rd Traffic Calming

Shoji Takahashi asked TAC to consider traffic data collection near 67 Overlook Rd with collection to take place in the spring.

10. Update: Crosby St Traffic Calming

Shoji Takahashi asked TAC to consider traffic data collection near Falmouth Rd with collection to take place in the spring.

11. Update: Bates Rd Left Turn

Bill Copithorne observed evening rush hour yesterday on a clear night. He observed nine left-turning vehicles, and none were stuck waiting through the cycle.

His conclusion is that there is no problem with the current configuration, and he will write a memo to the Select Board to close out this item.

12. Update: Everett St and Mass Ave

Bill Copithorne informed TAC that Everett St is 24' wide with parking allowed. It is not feasible to make two lanes without No Parking installed. (Currently there isn't a No Parking sign within 20' of the Mass Ave intersection.)

Corey Rateau added that State law is no parking within 20' of an intersection. No Parking signs may be added and do not require Select Board approval. He asked whether it was necessary to stripe two lanes.

Jeff Maxtutis, Howard Muise, and Scott Smith agreed that striping two lanes is not necessary.

Bill Copithorne concluded that DPW will add No Parking signs near the intersection and will write a memo to the Select Board to close out this item.

13. Update: Mt Gilboa Traffic Calming

Ray Jones noted that the speed feedback sign and RRFB are now installed. He asked TAC to consider a speed study on Westminster Ave based on resident feedback. In the spring, he will conduct stop-sign compliance monitoring at the intersection of Westminster Ave and Westmoreland Ave.

Corey Rateau commented that speeding on Westminster Ave in the past has not been excessive, while speeding on Lowell has been a problem. Howard Muise added that the Town of Lexington has since changed the geometry of the Lowell St and Westminster Ave intersection, which might reduce speeds on Westminster Ave.

Bill Copithorne noted that stop bars at the Westminster Ave and Westmoreland Ave intersection is on the list for road striping this season.

14. Update: Thompson Area Traffic Calming

Laura Swan observed that large amounts of snow since the last meeting has impacted traffic in the Thompson Area.

15. Discussion: Eastern Ave

Laura Swan noted that the Complete Streets plan included Eastern Ave as a possible place of interest for bicycle lanes. Dan Amstutz added that Connect Arlington included a climbing (i.e., uphill) bicycle lane on Eastern Ave, which

would likely require the removal of parking on that side to accommodate it. Projects on the Brackett Playground and the Robbins Farm Park had mentioned traffic on Eastern Ave as an area to investigate and address.

Corey Rateau expressed concern on removing parking for a bicycle lane as Robbins Farm Park is a destination park. Petru Sofio countered that Eastern Ave is approximately 32' wide, meaning that a 7'-parking lane, and 10'-travel lanes could leave enough space for a bicycle lane. He requested that TAC not discount adding a bicycle lane without a utilization study.

Bill Copithorne added that Spring St, which extends east from Eastern Ave, could use better facilities. Spring St runs from Menotomy Rocks Park and uphill to Brackett School; TAC could consider the feasibility of a sidewalk.

16. Moment to thank Howard Muise for this work with TAC

Jeff Maxtutis thanked Howard Muise for his service to the TAC over many years outlining the many projects and achievements completed by TAC under his leadership.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm.